

By: Kolkhorst, et al.

S.B. No. 6

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to emergency and disaster management, response, and recovery.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 418.005, Government Code, is amended by adding Subsection (c-1) to read as follows:

(c-1) The training course provided under this section related to the emergency management responsibilities of officers of political subdivisions must include training based on the disaster response guide as required by Section 418.054(b).

SECTION 2. Subchapter C, Chapter 418, Government Code, is amended by adding Sections 418.054, 418.055, 418.056, and 418.057 to read as follows:

Sec. 418.054. DISASTER RESPONSE GUIDE. (a) The division shall develop a model guide for local officials regarding disaster response and recovery. The guide must provide a comprehensive approach to disaster recovery by local officials and include information on:

- (1) contracting for debris removal;
- (2) obtaining federal disaster funding;
- (3) coordinating the availability and construction of short-term and long-term housing; and
- (4) obtaining assistance from local, state, and federal volunteer organizations.

1 (b) The division, in coordination with the Texas A&M
2 AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas A&M Engineering Extension
3 Service, shall provide training based on the disaster response
4 guide as a part of the emergency management training course
5 provided under Section 418.005.

6 Sec. 418.055. CATASTROPHIC DEBRIS MANAGEMENT PLAN AND
7 TRAINING. (a) The division, in consultation with the Emergency
8 Management Council, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the
9 Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, the Texas Commission on
10 Environmental Quality, the Texas Department of Transportation, the
11 comptroller, and political subdivisions, shall develop a
12 catastrophic debris management plan and model guide for use by
13 political subdivisions in the event of a disaster.

14 (b) The plan must:

15 (1) provide a guide for clearance and disposal of
16 debris caused by a disaster; and

17 (2) include:

18 (A) provisions for the use of trench burners and
19 air curtain incinerators of vegetative debris, including
20 identifying sources of equipment for use immediately following a
21 disaster; and

22 (B) contracting standards and a model contract
23 for use in procuring debris removal services following a disaster.

24 (c) The division shall consult with the comptroller about
25 including a contract for debris removal services on the schedule of
26 multiple award contracts developed under Subchapter I, Chapter
27 2155, or in another cooperative purchasing program administered by

1 the comptroller.

2 (d) The Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, in
3 coordination with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality,
4 shall establish a training program for state agencies and political
5 subdivisions on the use of trench burners in debris removal.

6 Sec. 418.056. WET DEBRIS STUDY GROUP. (a) In this
7 section, "study group" means the wet debris study group established
8 under this section.

9 (b) The wet debris study group is established and consists
10 of the following members:

- 11 (1) each member of the Emergency Management Council;
12 (2) representatives from river authorities appointed
13 by the governor;
14 (3) environmental experts appointed by the governor;
15 and
16 (4) a representative from the Texas Historical
17 Commission appointed by the governor.

18 (c) The study group shall study issues related to preventing
19 the creation of wet debris and best practices for clearing wet
20 debris following a disaster, including:

- 21 (1) the creation of maintenance programs for bodies of
22 water in this state;
23 (2) issues related to the clearance of wet debris on
24 private property following a disaster; and
25 (3) potential sources of funding for the clearance of
26 wet debris following a disaster.

27 (d) Not later than November 1, 2020, the study group shall

1 submit a report containing recommendations on the issues described
2 by Subsection (c) to each member of the legislature.

3 (e) The study group is abolished and this section expires
4 January 1, 2021.

5 Sec. 418.057. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WORK GROUP. (a) In
6 this section:

7 (1) "Emergency management director" and "emergency
8 management coordinator" mean the director and coordinator,
9 respectively, designated under Section 418.1015.

10 (2) "Work group" means the work group established
11 under this section.

12 (b) The division shall establish a work group of persons
13 knowledgeable on emergency management to study and develop a
14 proposal for enhancing the training and credentialing of emergency
15 management directors and emergency management coordinators.

16 (c) As part of the study and proposal under Subsection (b),
17 the work group shall:

18 (1) assess the training and credentials necessary for
19 emergency management directors and emergency management
20 coordinators to effectively oversee the response to and recovery
21 from a disaster; and

22 (2) consult with institutions of higher education as
23 defined by Section 61.003, Education Code, on the development of
24 degree programs in emergency management in addition to the programs
25 that exist in this state on September 1, 2019.

26 (d) In conducting the assessment required by Subsection
27 (c)(1), the work group shall consider:

1 (1) whether the differences in geography, population,
2 and critical infrastructure between emergency management
3 directors' or emergency management coordinators' jurisdictions
4 warrant different levels of training and credentialing;

5 (2) whether the legislature should enact laws
6 requiring an emergency management director or emergency management
7 coordinator to participate in emergency management training and
8 credentialing before overseeing the response to and recovery from a
9 disaster;

10 (3) whether to implement incentives for emergency
11 management directors, emergency management coordinators, and any
12 other emergency management personnel to complete additional
13 training and continuing education; and

14 (4) proposals for paying the cost for training for
15 emergency management directors and emergency management
16 coordinators that is more rigorous than the training required by
17 law for the directors and coordinators on September 1, 2019.

18 (e) Not later than November 1, 2020, the work group shall
19 submit the proposal required under this section to the governor,
20 lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and
21 members of the legislature.

22 (f) The work group is abolished and this section expires
23 January 1, 2021.

24 SECTION 3. (a) In this section:

25 (1) "Commission" means the Health and Human Services
26 Commission.

27 (2) "Division" means the Texas Division of Emergency

1 Management.

2 (b) The commission and the division shall conduct a study to
3 determine the feasibility of developing:

4 (1) a single intake form that would compile all
5 information needed to obtain disaster assistance from multiple
6 state and federal programs for an individual who needs assistance
7 as a result of a disaster; and

8 (2) an automated intake system for collecting the
9 information.

10 (c) The commission and the division shall coordinate with
11 the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other appropriate state
12 and federal agencies to conduct the study under Subsection (b) of
13 this section. The commission and the division must determine
14 whether the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other
15 appropriate state and federal agencies will accept the single
16 intake form.

17 (d) Not later than September 1, 2020, the commission and the
18 division shall prepare and submit a written report to the
19 legislature containing the findings of the study conducted under
20 Subsection (b) of this section and any recommendations to the
21 legislature.

22 (e) This section expires January 1, 2021.

23 SECTION 4. Not later than January 1, 2020, the Texas
24 Division of Emergency Management shall develop the catastrophic
25 debris management plan and model guide required by Section 418.055,
26 Government Code, as added by this Act.

27 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.